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Dead Bird Reporting and Testing

Currently in New Hampshire, dead bird reporting and testing are a part of several systems for early disease detection. In order to ensure local officials are aware of current situations and assist in appropriate reporting and disease testing, the public is being advised to report dead birds to their local animal control or health officer. The local officer should then relay this information to the appropriate agency (see below). In certain cases, the bird may be selected for testing for avian influenza or other diseases. If the bird is not chosen for testing, the public should be advised to protect their hands with gloves or a plastic bag and dispose of it by burial, or double bagging in zip-lock type plastic bags and placed in the trash. Please see below for information on disease testing currently performed and the appropriate agency to contact.

Avian Influenza: The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department and the United States Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services are conducting wild bird testing to detect highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 should it arrive in New Hampshire. This is the type of influenza currently circulating in other parts of the world causing human and bird illness and death. Specific species of birds are being targeted for testing. Additional information regarding avian influenza and statewide planning can be found on the NH Department of Health and Human Services website at www.dhhs.nh.gov.

Migratory Birds - The USDA Wildlife Services office encourages reporting of dead birds fitting the following criteria:

- A cluster (same location and time) of more than 5 non-water birds; or
- A single water bird (a bird with webbed feet, long slender legs, or a long bill)

To report dead birds that fit these criteria, the USDA Wildlife Services office can be contacted at 1-866-4-USDA-WS (1-866-487-3297). Birds may be eligible for avian influenza testing based on species of bird, number of birds found, and other criteria. USDA requests, if possible, that birds not be handled prior to testing. USDA will arrange for bird pick-up and testing if appropriate. NH DHHS is unable to test birds for avian influenza.

Poultry - If you have questions regarding avian influenza and poultry (such as chickens or turkeys) or wish to report dead poultry, please contact the State Veterinarian's office at 603-271-2404.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile virus (WNV): To report dead birds that do not fulfill the above criteria for possible infection with EEE or WNV, you can call the NH DHHS dead bird reporting phone line at 1-866-273-(NILE) 6453 between June 1st and October 31st. Corvids (crows, ravens, blue jays) that have recently died may be eligible for WNV and EEE testing.